unjustifiable discrimination between the members of the WTO, contrary to the requirements of the chapeau of the Article XX of the GATT 1994. The Panel and the Appellate Body report were adopted in the meeting of the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) held on 6th November, 1998. It was jointly agreed that the Reasonable Period of Time (RPT) granted to US will be 13 months for implementing the rulings and recommendations of the DSB. **The said RPT which commenced on 6th November, 1998 and will expire on 6th December, 99.**

As regards the exports of shrimps to USA, it may be mentioned that exports of shrimps from India to USA are taking place on the basis of a certificate being given by Marine products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) as prescribed by US Department of State. However, the shrimps harvested from the sea by vessels using mechanical means of net retrieval are not eligible to be exported to USA unless the vessels use Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs).

The US has time till 6th December, 99 to implement the rulings and recommendations of the DSB. As part of the process of implementation, the US's Deptt. of State has revised it's guidelines for implementing Section 609. The revised guidelines, in accordance with the rulings and recomendations of the DSB are intended to (i) introduce greater flexibility in considering the comparability of foreign programmes and the US programmes, which implies that US is willing to consider credible alternate programmes other than use of TEDs. (ii) It has introduced transparency and application of due process in decision making procedures for certifying nations who will be eligible to export shrimps. (iii) It has expanded the list of the exempted harvesting methods.

Further, US has taken initiative for having negotiations with an aim to arrive at an Agreement with the Governments of the Indian Ocean Region on the protection of the sea turtles in that region.

US has also offered technical training in the design, construction, installation and operation of TEDs to any member country that requests it.

Recommendations by National Commission for Backward Classes for Inclusion of Castes in OBC Category

*9. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of representations for inclusion of several castes in O.B.C. category, received by National Commission for Backward Classes since April, 1997 and how many of the castes have since been recommended for inclusion by the Commission, out of those representations; and

(b) whether Government have since accepted all the recommendations of the Commission, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) The National Commission for Backward Classes has received representation for inclusion of 155 castes/communities (including sub-caste/ synonyms) in the Central List of OBCs since April 1997. Out of these, 126 castes/communities (including sub-caste/synonyms) have been recommended by the National Commission for Backward classes for inclusion in the Central List of OBCs.

(b) The Government have so far not disagreed with the recommendation of NCBC regarding inclusion in the OBC List. The Government considers the advices received from NCBC on a continuous basis.

The Government of India since April, 1997 have accepted and notified the inclusion/modification in the Central List of OBCs covered by 122 advices received from National Commission for Backward Classes. The representations for inclusion of castes/communities (including sub-caste/ synonyms) is received by the National Commision for Backward Classes continually and inclusion of castes/communities (including sub-caste/ synonyms) recommended by the Commission is processed by the Government in consultation with various related Ministries/Departments before a final decision is taken.

Inclusion of Jats in OBC List

*10. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since agreed for inclusion of Jats and other castes in O.B.C. list and if so, the details thereof;